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For Immediate Release

June 1, 2006

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Disaster Medical Assistance Team honored at state Capitol

LANSING – The Michigan-1 Disaster Medical Assistance Team was presented with a special tribute on the Senate floor today by Sen. Jud Gilbert for its service aiding hurricane victims.

“It is with great pride that we honor the members of DMAT for their contributions in the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Rita last year,” said Gilbert, R-Algonac. “In many instances they were the initial medical first responders in the disaster areas. We offer our sincere thanks to each of the men and women who courageously represented Michigan by providing medical services to those in need.”

The team consisted of physicians, nurses, physician assistants, pharmacists, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, logistics and communications personnel and administrators. They assisted in saving the lives of many hurricane victims who often were separated from family and friends and in need of medical attention.

“These medical professionals committed their time, energy, and expert ability to serve the needs of the sick and injured, putting the welfare of others above concern for their own safety and well-being,” Gilbert said. “It also is important to recognize the families of these Michigan DMAT members, who carried on commendably in their absence and provided support behind the scenes.”

One local resident, William Drake of Cottrellville, participated in the assistance effort.

“We are honored to stand before the Senate today for this humble recognition,” said Drake. “The Michigan-1 DMAT has been in existence for more than 20 years and has been deployed all over the United States and other countries as well. This past year when called to assist with the hurricanes, many of our members responded with less than six hours notice, leaving behind families and employers. We thank you for this honor and recognition.”

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Photos of Sen. Gilbert, Mr. Drake and the team are available for download at the Senate Majority Photowire at <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Gilbert/Gilbert.htm>